

If Passed By Full House, Amendments Will Fund Critical California Water Projects And Ease Regulations To Transfer Water Around The State

WASHINGTON, D.C. – This evening, the House Rules Committee accepted two amendments authored by Congressman Jim Costa (D-Fresno) and Congressman Dennis Cardoza (D-Merced) which will provide \$10 million in funding toward the Intertie and Two-Gates projects, direct the Secretary of the Interior to diversify sources of water for refuges to free up more water for agricultural water users, ease the ability for the state to do inter-county transfers, and expedite a plan to deal with the Giant Garter Snake, which has been an impediment to critical water transfers. Costa testified before the Rules Committee on the importance of these two amendments to Valley farmers, farm workers, and the economy. The full House will debate and consider both amendments to the Energy and Water Appropriations bill this Thursday.

“The first amendment provides needed funds to help jumpstart two important water projects in California: Intertie and Two-Gates, among other projects,” Costa said. “Our second amendment is a two-pronged approach. It eases our state’s ability to transfer water from county to county. Secondly, it directs the Secretary of the Interior to speed along and implement a plan for the Giant Garter Snake. The lack of plan for the garter snake from the Department of Interior has hamstrung needed water transfers within the state for decades, thus hurting our Valley’s farmers and farm workers.”

“We need to find effective ways to solve our water problems in our state,” Costa continued. “First and foremost, that begins with the art of the possible. These amendments are additional progress and part of a continued effort for our Valley. Finally, I want to thank Congressman Cardoza for his work in helping these amendments pass the Rules Committee.”

The first amendment reduces the Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner’s Policy and

Administration account by \$10 million and transfers it to the CALFED account to help speed along the Intertie and Two-Gates projects, in addition to diversifying refuge water supplies, which are currently taken from supplies that would otherwise go to agricultural water users within the Central Valley Project. Costa's second amendment will allow transfers of water between certain Central Valley Project contractors within the South Delta Divisions of the Central Valley Project. It also directs the Secretary of the Interior to expeditiously revise, finalize and implement the Draft Recovery plan for the Giant Garter Snake.